

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE September 3, 2010

TO Housing Committee Members: Steve Salazar, Chair, Carolyn R. Davis, Vice-Chair, Tennell Atkins, Dwaine Caraway, Ann Margolin, Pauline Medrano

SUBJECT Dallas Home Connection

On Tuesday, September 7, 2010, you will be briefed on Dallas Home Connection. A copy of the information is attached.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.C. Gonzalez', written over a circular scribble.

A.C. Gonzalez  
Assistant City Manager

Attachment

c: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager  
Deborah Watkins, City Secretary  
Tom P. Perkins, Jr., City Attorney  
Craig Kinton, City Auditor  
C. Victor Lander, Administrative Judge, Municipal Court  
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager  
Forest Turner, Assistant City Manager  
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer  
Jerry Killingsworth, Housing/Community Services Director  
Helena Stevens-Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager



## General Briefing

**The Dallas Home Connection (DHC)** is a collaboration of select nonprofit home builders and financial institutions dedicated to providing quality affordable housing in the heart of Dallas' southern sector. The initiative involves 4 nonprofit homebuilders, Center for Nonprofit Management, Capital One Bank, Urban League, Enterprise Community Development and the City. These partners are collaborating under one umbrella (Dallas Home Connection) to share intellectual capital and resources with the intention of helping working class families qualify for and afford attractive homes in Dallas' southern sector through an education process, mentoring, and subsidies. This highly acclaimed project stands to raise tax bases, strengthen neighborhoods, reduce crime and instill pride in those who up to now have only dreamed of owning their own homes. The motto for the Dallas Home Connection and its education program called the HomeBuyers Club is "**Get it. Keep it.**" - and so far, the owners of homes who have come through the program boast less than 2% foreclosure rate, which is unheard of, particularly in this economy!

While these dedicated home builders have individually built over 200 affordable homes in Dallas' west and southern sectors over the last ten years, they are now partners with the objective of increasing the number of affordable homes for working class families by building a sustainable pool of qualified buyers through an education program called **The HomeBuyers Club**. The Urban League provides financial counseling and support throughout the qualifying process and long after owners get their homes. All vendors in the mortgage and title process are thoroughly vetted by the DHC to protect the interests of the HomeBuyers Club members.

### Who are the DHC Builders?

- Builders of Hope (Primarily in West Dallas) directed by Norman Henry
- EDCO (East Dallas Community Organization) directed by Jerry Carlton
- ICDC (Innercity Community Development Corporation) directed by Diane Ragsdale
- South Fair Community Development Corporation directed by Ted Law

### DHC Communities currently include:

- Bexar Street Village
- Claude Street/East Oakcliff

- Dolphin Heights
- Eagle Ford
- Park Row Estates
- Pittman Place
- Thornton Heights
- West Dallas BOH

## **What is the HOMEBUYER CLUB (HBC)?**

The motto of DHC is “*Get it. Keep it.*” which is timely, relevant, and critical given the current economy. In partnership with the Urban League of Dallas, DHC provides the **HomeBuyer Club education program** as an essential element to help potential home buyers succeed in qualifying for a mortgage and building stronger credit and savings through sound financial counseling.

The HBC process helps first-time homebuyers learn about the home buying process through seminars, support from other first time homebuyers, and consistently reliable information. Individual counseling with HBC experts generally include topics such as budgeting, creating a savings plan, and repairing bad credit.

The HBC provides support even after the sale to help owners continue to make smart decisions and avoid the financial troubles and mistakes that can lead to the loss of their home. The goal is to help potential homebuyers **get** their dream home—and **keep it!**

## **Homebuyers Club Benefits:**

- Education into the complex process of buying a home
- Up to \$25,000 in federal, state and local mortgage assistance grants
- Credit Counseling to help you qualify for a mortgage
- Tips on shopping for a new home
- Training on maintaining your new home
- Strong neighborhood associations to provide a warm, friendly, and safe environment for your family.

## **DHC home overview:**

- Quality, affordable single-family housing. Typically 3 bedrooms 2 baths with attached garage. Appx 1200-1500 sq feet.
- Most come with complete appliance package including washer and dryer and home security system.
- Most neighborhoods are just minutes from downtown, shopping and entertainment.
- Most feature close access to DART train and bus lines.
- Many neighborhoods feature recognized public and private schools.

- Homes sell for \$100,000 to \$130,000
- Typical homebuyers are eligible for grants of around \$20,000 to defer the cost of the homes. This brings the cost of the homes to under \$100,000 for most buyers.

### **Amenities:**

In the modern world a home is only as good as the amenities the homeowner can access. That means being able to get groceries, gas for the car, and the easy availability of goods and services that create a high quality of life. Single family homes offered by Dallas Homebuyers Connection members deliver on this promise. Homeowners will buy it, keep it and love it.

### **Target Homebuyer:**

- Majority are Single Females, or single females with children
- Age: 30's to 40's
- Work as teachers, healthcare, clerical workers or domestic help.
- Income: \$25,000 - 60,000
- Good solid hardworking citizens
- Current renters; first-time homebuyers.



### **Important to Know:**

- For every 500 single family units built:
  - 1,223 full-time jobs created in construction & related industries.
  - \$39.7 million wages earned.
  - \$21.23 million in taxes created.
- Why a Shortage?
  - Difficulty creating and maintaining a pipeline of qualified homebuyers
  - Limited funding and resources to promote sales and engage the community.
  - Lack of a coordinated system that incorporates code enforcement, crime reduction, and neighborhood involvement.
  - Negative perception of the products and locations

## Background Information

### The Southern Sector

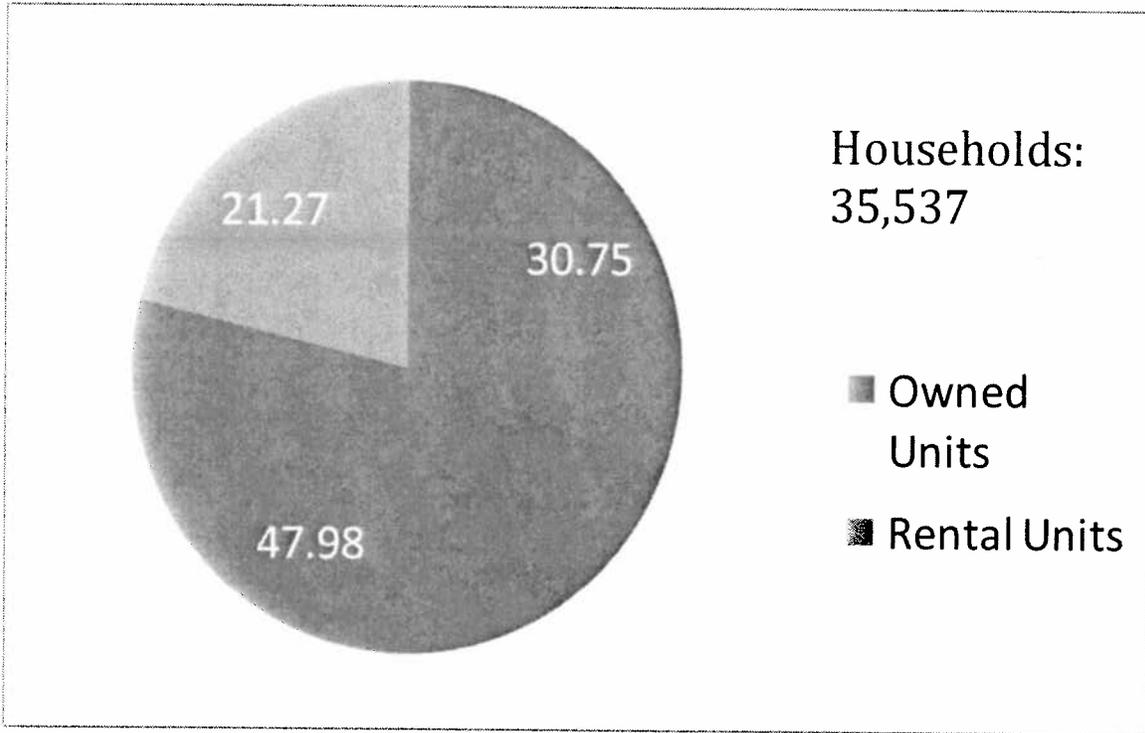
A homebuyer in one of the several sites offered in the Fair Park/ South Dallas area can within minutes utilize neighborhood amenities. There are two banks along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, a Minyards Grocery store, several nearby gas stations along with an assortment of local and chain restaurants offering a unique slice of South Dallas life. However if these don't fit your tastes one of the best amenities offered to potential homebuyers will, quick and easy access to Dallas freeways. For some northern suburban community residents freeways are becoming an increasingly endangered species with some single tolls for a car exceeding \$1.50.

South Dallas residents have easy access to several highways US 75/Central Expressway, I-30 and I-45. Driving a short distance on these roads residents can connect to I-35e and the Dallas North Tollway, offering complete access to the entire offerings of the Metroplex. I-35 which is dubbed the NAFTA superhighway, the roadway provides vehicular access to all of North America. Time of travel in town will of course vary depending on time of day and traffic loads on the roads.

However, if a resident wants to enjoy the advantage of additional amenities available in the Uptown area driving should not prove problematic. We left from a Bexar Street townhome at 9:14am and arrived in the Walmart neighborhood market parking lot at 9:20, two minutes later we were in the parking lot of Albertson's grocery store on McKinney Avenue. This was done at one of the busiest times to make the trip--Tuesday morning at the tail end of rush hour traffic. The two grocery stores are to the left of Central Expressway. A right turn lands one in the Target parking lot in about the same time. If you choose a 15 to 20 minute trip east on I-30 will take you to either the Walmart Super Center or Sams Club near the intersection of I-30 and St Francis. There are 3 more banks, an office supply store, Radio Shack, an Auto Parts Supply store among other retail offerings.

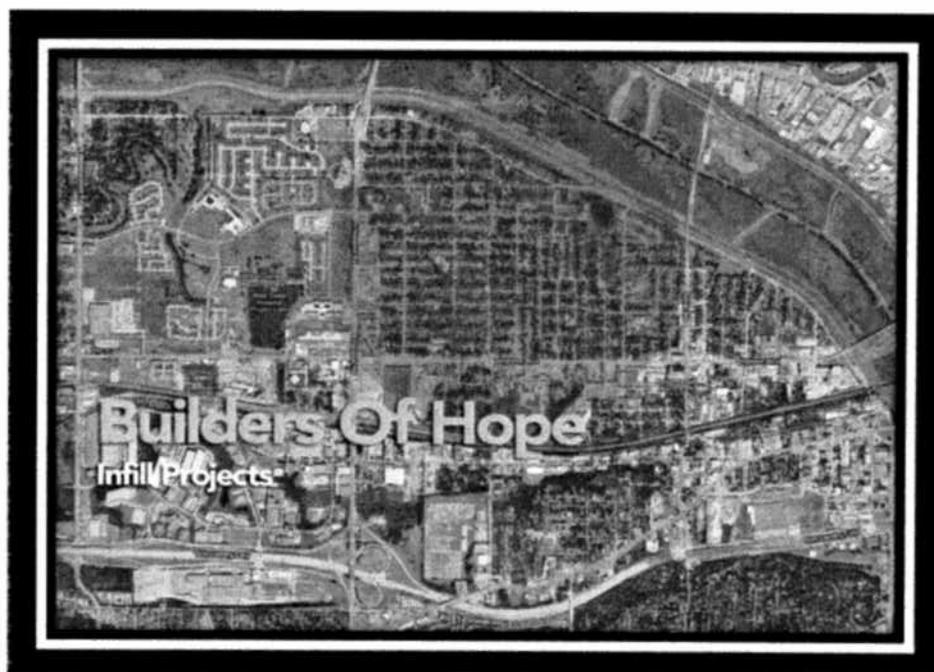
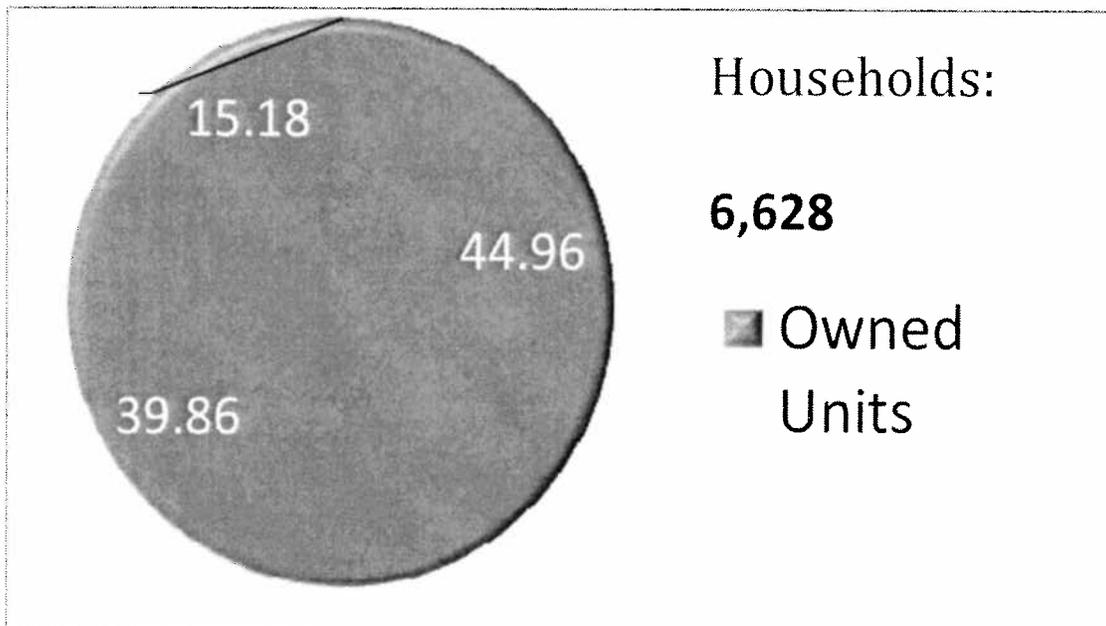
However new homeowners will need to visit one of the Nation's leading hardware and home supply stores Home Depot and Lowes. The two can easily be found along Lemmon Avenue corridor a roughly 20 to 25 minute drive. Another 5 minutes and you are at Love Field ready to board your Southwest Airlines flight to anywhere they fly.

## South Dallas Overview



## West Dallas

Prospective West Dallas homeowners are almost within walking distance to a smorgasbord of retail offerings. Since the City of Dallas and the State teamed up to create the Cockrell Hill exit off of I-30 in the mid 90's, the area west of downtown has blossomed into a full service shopping district. Having an affordable home is better when Mom and Dad can bring home high quality food and services. A family can find a suburban variety of high quality merchandise at affordable prices in their backyard. Shoppers have the availability of the Wal-Mart Super Center, Lowes, Best Buy, and several banks. There are dozens of smaller offerings ranging from McDonalds and Chili's to Starbucks. There is even a recently opened hotel.



## **Public Education**

### **South Dallas Report**

Public education is critical to the future growth of any community. That is why the impressive success of schools in the Fair Park/South Dallas area is so important. Few if any areas of the Dallas Independent School District have fared better on the Texas Essential Skills and Knowledge tests (TEKS) administered in all Texas public schools or received higher accountability ratings from the Texas Education Agency.

### **Current Ratings**

A review of the ratings of the 10 DISD schools in the Fair Park/South Dallas area confirms the quality of education available to families with school age children:

City Park Elementary School: recognized; Paul. L Dunbar Learning Center: recognized; Julia C. Frazier Elementary School; exemplary; Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center: recognized; Charles Rice Learning Center: exemplary; Joseph J. Rhoads Learning Center: acceptable; Oran M. Roberts Elementary School: exemplary; Phillis Wheatley Elementary School: exemplary; Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School: exemplary; Billy Earl Dade Middle Learning Center: acceptable; James Madison High School: acceptable.

### **Future Building Improvements**

The Dallas School District's future financial commitment to the schools in this area also remains strong. In the 2008 school bond issue, the following funding for Fair Park/South Dallas schools was approved by voters:

- City Park Elementary School \$1.2 million
- Billy Earl Dade Middle Learning Center 3.1 million
- Paul Dunbar Elementary School 4.2 million
- Julia Frazier Elementary School 2.6 million
- Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center 1.4 million
- J.J. Rhoads Learning Center 3.2 million
- Rice Learning Center 4.5 million
- Wheatley Elementary School 1.2 million

A total of \$21.4 million in school improvements will be taking place in the Fair Park/South Dallas area, providing new classrooms and learning facilities and state-of-the-art technology and equipment for students.

### **Numerous Awards**

These schools have made steady progress in their scores on TEKS testing and have received recognition and numerous awards including "Best Public Schools in the State of Texas," "National Center for Urban Transformation Award," "Texas Business Education Honor Roll," "Governor's Excellence Award," and "Texas Successful Schools Award. A teacher from Charles Rice Learning Center has even appeared on Oprah Winfrey and the Ellen DeGeneres shows.

### **Strong Partnership Support**

Schools in the Fair Park/South Dallas area also enjoy strong partnerships with private foundations, higher learning institutions and major companies that provide support for quality education programming. Among the major supporters are ATMOS Energy, Texas Instruments, the Meadows Foundation, Wal-Mart Stores, Southern Methodist University, Bagley Foundation, Foundation for Community Empowerment and Raytheon Manufacturing.

## **West Dallas Report**

West Dallas children enjoy better schools since completion of nearly \$28 million dollars of renovations, improvements and the construction of a new elementary building. This is evidence of the Dallas Independent School District's commitment to improve educational opportunities. The upgrades in the physical plants are achieving some payoffs with honors and awards for academic excellence.

## **Current Ratings**

A review of the ratings of the 14 DISD schools serving West Dallas displays a strong pattern of improvement in the quality of education. About a third of the schools are currently rated as exemplary or recognized. All of the other schools are rated acceptable by the Texas Education Association. The majority of the remaining schools show increases in test scores for math, science, reading and writing. 7 of the 10 elementary schools earned ratings as exemplary or recognized over the past 5 years.

### **Exemplary**

- The Dallas Environmental Science Academy, middle school
- Sidney Lanier Expressive Arts Vanguard, elementary school

### **Recognized**

- Gabe P. Allen charter elementary school
- Arcadia Park elementary school
- Eladio R. Martinez elementary school learning center

### **Acceptable**

- C.F. Carr elementary school
- George W. Carver elementary school learning center
- Lorenzo De Zavala elementary school
- Amelia Earhart elementary school learning center
- Sequoyah elementary school learning center
- Stevens Park elementary school
- Edison middle school
- Quintanilla middle school
- Pinkston high school

## **Numerous Awards**

Members of the West Dallas schools are demonstrating their excellence in many different fields. Pinkston high school Principal Norma Villegas, received the 2007 Outstanding Principal of the Year Award from the Association of Hispanic School Administrators. Thomas Edison learning center students placed first second and forth in a recent math Olympiad. Musicians from the Quintanilla Middle school won UIL honors for Top Middle School Jazz Band. Carr elementary was one of only 83 elementary

schools in the state named to the Texas 2005 Honor Roll. Carver was designated a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School in 2003.

### **Building Improvements**

The Dallas School District's financial commitment to West Dallas was confirmed in the 2002 school bond issue. The construction of Arcadia Park elementary school was the largest single element of the program and opened for learning in 2005. More than 98% of the renovations and additions at the other schools are complete. The nearly \$28 million investment is serving the needs of West Dallas families by providing new classrooms, learning facilities and state-of-the-art technology.

### **Private Schools**

In addition to the Dallas Independent School system there are 75 Private Schools within 10 miles of the South Dallas target area. If the distance is reduced to five miles there are still more than a dozen parochial schools. The numbers are similar for potential West Dallas residents. Some of the schools are the same but within 10 miles there are 85 private schools, while within 5 miles there are 16 schools. The admittance and costs of the institutions will vary. Some may offer financial assistance for parents.

### **Higher Education**

In West Dallas the Dallas County Community College system has a presence. The schools main branch is located in Downtown less than 5 miles away. However the west campus is now open offering classes at the location on West Hampton rd. The course selection is targeted to improve skills of residents offering classes for workforce training, English as a second language and training for a GED.

### **Parks**

Fair Park is the crown jewel of the Dallas Park system. The South Dallas park is a wonderful collection of 20<sup>th</sup> century Art Deco architecture. The buildings were originally built to house the 1936 World's Fair which also celebrated Texas 100 year anniversary. The 277-acre park houses several museums, permanent exhibits and the annual Texas State Fair. The city has made a significant investment into the redevelopment of the Rochester Park recreation area near the Bexar Street townhomes offered by East Dallas Community Organization (EDCO). In West Dallas a major amateur sports facility is underway.

### **Health Care**

Dallas is home to one of the busiest birthing centers in America. In 2009 almost 15 thousand new lives began in Parkland Hospital. The County hospital is also where the regional burn and trauma units are located. The hospital complex is a teaching hospital, in connection with the University of Texas Southwest Medical Center at Dallas. Groundbreaking is planned for later this year (2010) on an estimated \$1.27 billion dollar new hospital with more than 825 beds. The Parkland complex offers a complete range of medical services to both paying clients and those who cannot afford healthcare. Children's Medical Center is also located in the general proximity of Parkland. While the two hospitals are separate entities they share a close working relationship, sharing doctors and expertise. In fact Doctors and patients can travel between the two facilities through a walkway.

UT Southwestern University Hospitals are the third facility sharing the medical campus. The complex formerly known as St. Paul and Zale Lipshy hospitals offers almost a full array of medical services. The University Hospital doesn't offer Emergency Room services due to the proximity of Parkland.

The entire medical complex sits off I-35e. Travel times from the target areas will vary depending on the time of day. One should budget no less than 15 minutes for off peak commutes. During peak times travel will be considerably longer. However DART's Green line light rail commuter train will not be held up with heavy traffic. The Green line is still under construction but is slated to be open in December 2010 whisking travelers from the South Dallas/Fair Park neighborhood north to Carrollton. Parkland is accessible to West Dallas residents using one of DART's many bus lines.

Methodist Hospital sits in North Oak Cliff. It's readily accessible by car from either West or South Dallas. Methodist is a also a major Trauma center. City ambulances alternate between Parkland Methodist and Baylor Medical Center to ensure the highest level of patient care. Methodist sits in North Oak Cliff. It is a full service hospital that is readily accessible off of I-30.

*Although the communities in South and West Dallas are the key focus areas of this initiative, the City of Dallas as a whole will be impacted by its implementation and success.*

